

US National Phase for PCT/IT03/00225

Serial No. 10/511,255

Applicants: ROBERTO DALLA VALLE

Docket No. 58009-018700/US

CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended): A ~~procedure~~ method for the production of sheets or tiles ~~[[(10)]]~~ in agglomerate material ~~consisting of~~ including products comprising of marble and/or granite and/or sand and/or quartz powders and binding resins, ~~also comprising possible inclusions of elements made from metal, glass, ceramic, wood, precious stones, comprising the following processing stages: the steps of:~~

- a) crushing of the components of the sheets or tiles ~~[[(10)]]~~;
- b) mixing of these components with the aforesaid binding resins;
- c) pouring these components inside a pressing die;
- d) pressing and compacting these components ~~[[,]]~~; and

hardening, at a predetermined pressure and temperature, in order to obtain a predetermined shape, advantageously quadrangular, and predetermined dimensions of these sheets or tiles ~~[[(10)]]~~, ~~said procedure being characterized in that wherein~~ before or during said the pouring stage ~~[[c)]]~~, a metal plate ~~[[(11)]]~~ is positioned inside the pressing die, said metal plate having a structure comprising a series of cavities suitable for receiving the mixture of the components which, during the polymerisation and hardening stages, bond to said plate ~~[[(11)]]~~ thus forming a single object with said sheet or tile ~~[[(10)]]~~.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A ~~procedure according to~~ The method of claim 1, wherein the metal plate ~~[[(11)]]~~ is obtained by die-pressing or rolling.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A ~~procedure according to~~ The method of claim 1, further comprising the following ~~additional stages:~~

~~[[d)]]~~ smoothing and polishing of at least one of the upper and/or lower surfaces of these sheets or tiles ~~[[(10)]]~~; and

~~[[e)]]~~ cutting to size, chamfering, gauging and flaring of these sheets or tiles ~~[[(10)]]~~.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A sheet or tile ~~[[(10)]]~~ made from an agglomerated material ~~consisting of~~ including a mixture of products comprising marble and/or granite and/or

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sand and/or quartz powders and binding resins, ~~also comprising possible inclusions of elements made from metal, glass, ceramic, wood, precious stones, characterised in that~~ wherein an inner or base portion of said sheet or tile is constituted by a metal plate ~~[[(11)]]~~ having a structure comprising a series of cavities and protuberances receiving the said mixture of products and such as to allow, during the polymerisation and hardening of the mixture, the bonding of the plate which thus forms a single object with the sheet or tile.

Claim 5 (currently amended): ~~[[A]] The sheet or tile (10) according to~~ of claim 4, in which the metal plate is made from aluminum.

Claim 6 (currently amended): ~~[[A]] The sheet or tile (10) according to~~ of claim 4, ~~in which~~ wherein the metal plate comprises of a plurality of cavities ~~[[(12)]]~~ and/or of protuberances designed to facilitate the adherence of the mixture to the plate.

Claim 7 (currently amended): ~~[[A]] The sheet or tile (10) according to~~ of claim 4, ~~in which~~ wherein the metal plate forms the base of the sheet or tile.

Claim 8 (currently amended): ~~[[A]] The sheet or tile (10) according to~~ of claim 4, ~~in which~~ wherein the metal plate is embedded in the sheet or tile.

Claim 9 (new): The method of claim 1, wherein the agglomerate material further comprises inclusions of elements made from metal, glass, ceramic, wood, or precious stones.

Claim 10 (new): The sheet of claim 4, wherein the agglomerate material further comprises inclusions of elements made from metal, glass, ceramic, wood, or precious stones.